

VIDEO MESSAGE BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE FOR THE FUNCTION ORGANIZED BY THE INFOSYS SCIENCE FOUNDATION TO AWARD THE INFOSYS PRIZE 2014

Rashtrapati Bhavan : 05.01.2015

Good evening, distinguished trustees of the Infosys Science Foundation; esteemed jury chairs, winners of the Infosys Prize 2014 and guests.

- I am happy to address this distinguished gathering and I congratulate the Infosys Science Foundation for instituting these awards which recognize and honour outstanding achievements of researchers and scientists across six categories.

- India, under the guidance of our first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, adopted science and technology as a priority from the early days of our independence.

- The creation of institutions for research and higher education began from 1950 itself. As early as 1951, the country decided to set up an Atomic Energy Commission which has enabled India build her own nuclear reactors. Soon, our space programme started enabling us to launch satellites into space.

- At the time of independence, our agriculture sector was under-developed and we were importer of food grains. The excellence of our scientists and toil of our farmers, together led to the Green Revolution of the sixties. Today, we are self-reliant in food and a major exporter of food grains. Such a transition has few parallels in human history.

- The years that followed have seen the emergence of strong Information Technology, Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical industries.

- A few months ago, we made history with the successful entry of the Mangalyaan into the Mars Orbit. India is the fourth in the world to reach the Mars. It is also the first to attain this goal in its very first attempt and at a cost of US\$ 74 million, a fraction of the money spent by others.

- While these milestones are a matter of pride for the nation, they also remind us of the distance still left to cover.

- Science is one of the creative endeavours of human mind. It plays a vital role in the advancement of human life and is central to technological progress. A scientific culture must determine the choices and decisions made by individuals, societies and nations.

- Research endeavours must advance the realms of knowledge and improve the lives of the common man. It must bring about social, environmental and economic betterment of our people.

- I am convinced that India's future is inextricably linked to the progress we can make in establishing strong foundations for scientific research within our country.

- I congratulate all the winners of the Infosys Prize 2014 and thank them for their contributions to the world of knowledge.

- I am confident that their achievements will inspire our youth to dedicate themselves to the service of science and society.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.